

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5115
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 03658

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, EAID, CG, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN VIEWS ON MOBUTU PLAN

REF: A) STATE 45049, B) BRUSSELS 3033

1. SUMMARY: BELGIANS PROVIDE US CLARIFICATION OF THEIR VIEWS ON MOBUTU PLAN AND APPEAR TO BE IN AGREEMENT WITH U.S. BOTH AS TO SUBSTANCE AND TIMING OF MOBUTU PLAN ONWARD SCENARIO AND ESPECIALLY REGARDING CRITICAL ROLE OF THE IMF TO SUCCESS OF MULTILATERAL EFFORT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN DETAILED AND FRANK SESSION FEBRUARY 24 WITH FOREIGN MINISTER'S DEPUTY CHEF DE CABINET (ONKELYNX) IN WHICH WE USED QUERIES POSED IN REFTEL A, WE RECEIVED CLARIFICATION OF BELGIAN THINKING ON POSSIBLE TIMING, ORDER AND SUBSTANCE OF EVENTS RELEVANT TO MOBUTU PLAN. ONKELYNX TOLD US THAT BELGIUM AGREES WITH OUR VIEW THAT MARCH 1-3 WASHINGTON VISIT OF FOREIGN MINISTER UMBA AND PLANNING

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MINISTER MULUMBA WILL BE LARGELY POLITICAL AND SYMBOLIC IN NATURE AND THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THEIR VISIT IS TO "DELIVER THE MAIL," I.E. MOBUTU'S LETTER, TO THE USG, THE WORLD BANK AND THE IMF AND IN SO DOING TO FORMALLY BEGIN THE INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION PHASE OF THE MOBUTU PLAN. HE SAID THAT NEITHER UMBA NOR MULUMBA IS QUALIFIED TO GO INTO ANY SIGNIFICANT DETAILS OF THE MOBUTU PLAN.

HE SAID THAT AS THERE STILL HAS BEEN NO BELGIAN DECISION REACHED ON TIMING OR MODALITIES OF A BELGIAN VISIT TO WASHINGTON, THERE WOULD BE NO DANGER OF SUCH A VISIT GETTING IN THE WAY OF THE UMBA-MULUMBA TRIP. HE SAID THAT IT MIGHT TURN OUT THAT OUTERS WOULD GO TO WASHINGTON AT SOME FUTURE DATE, BUT THAT HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THAT THERE MIGHT ONLY BE AN EXPERTS LEVEL VISIT AFTER THE MALDAGUE GROUP AND THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO DIGEST THE FINDINGS BASED ON THIS WEEK'S WORKING LEVEL MEETINGS WITH BOKANA AND HIS TEAM OF EXPERTS FROM KINSHASA, WHO ARE DUE TO WRAP UP THEIR WORK HERE THE AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 24.

3. ONKELYNX SAID THAT BOKANA CAME TO TOWN WITH AN "AMBITIOUS" 200 PAGE MOBUTU PLAN WHICH WAS FULL OF FACTS AND FIGURES BUT HAD THE FLAW OF FOCUSsing ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AS IF ZAIRE'S ECONOMIC HOUSE WERE IN PERFECT ORDER. (WE OBTAINED COPY OF THE BOKANA DOCUMENT EARLIER AND AF/I OFFICERS LEWIS AND SHURTLEFF ARE HAND-CARRYING IT TO WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 24). ONKELYNX SAID THAT MALDAGUE GRDUP EXPERTS HAVE BEEN ASKING HARD QUESTION OF BOKANA'S GROUP AND THAT ZAIRIANS WILL MAKE YET ANOTHER DRAFT OF THE MOBUTU PLAN BASED ON THESE DISCUSSIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, HE SAID THE BELGIANS FOUND THE ZAIRIAN FIGURES FOR EXTERNAL AID REQUIREMENTS TOO HIGH AND URGED BOKANA "TO BE REALISTIC AND NOT EXAGGERATE." HE STRESSED THAT

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BELGIANS REITERATED ONCE AGAIN THE FOLLOWING TWO BELGIAN PRECONDITIONS (WHICH BOKANA AND HIS PEOPLE FULLY UNDERSTAND) FOR CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH ZAIRE UNDER THE PLAN AND ANY POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- REORGANIZATION OF THE BANK OF ZAIRE AND THE NAMING BY THE IMF OF A DIRECTOR GENERAL WITH ADEQUATE POWERS TO CLEAN UP THE BANK; AND

- SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF ZAIRIAN-IMF STABILIZATION AGREEMENT.

4. ONKELYNX SAID THAT IMF OFFICIAL TANCONI IS SCHEDULED TO GO TO KINSHASA IN MID-MARCH TO DISCUSS THE IMF STABILIZATION AGREEMENT AND TO BEGIN TALKS ABOUT THE REORGANIZATION OF THE BANK OF ZAIRE, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF HOW MANY INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS WILL BE INVOLVED AND WHAT EXACTLY ARE TO BE THE POWERS OF THE NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL. ONKELYNX SAID THAT THE BELGIANS ARE STRONGLY URGING BOKANA NOT TO LET ALMOST ANOTHER MONTH GO BY AWAITING TANCONI'S ARRIVAL IN KINSHASA BUT TO GO TO WASHINGTON

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND START TALKING SERIOUSLY WITH THE IMF ABOUT THE STABILIZATION PLAN AND THE BANK'S REFORM. ONKELYNX STRESSED TO US THAT, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF SCENARIO AND TIMING, THE NEXT SIGNIFICANT STEP COULD BE A VISIT BY BOKANA, BIEME AND THE EXPERTS TO WASHINGTON SOON, "POSSIBLY" EVEN GOING ALONG WITH THE UMBA-MULUMBA ROAD SHOW BUT CERTAINLY SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 2 OF 2 BRUSSELS 3658 BEING SERVICED.
COPY TO FOLLOW.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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5. ONKELYNX TOLD US THAT IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT BELGIUM HAS NO DATE IN VIEW FOR THE CONVENING IN BRUSSELS OF A MEETING ON THE MOBUTU PLAN. HE CONFIRMED THAT A FIRST MEETING WAS VIEWED AS AN "INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS" AND TOTALLY "NON-COMMITTAL" IN NATURE. HE SAID THAT THE COMPOSITION AND PURPOSE OF A SECOND BRUSSELS MEETING ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT AT THIS EARLY DATE. HE SAID THAT THE NEXT SESSION OF THE PARIS CLUB ON ZAIRIAN DEBT RENEGOTIATION, SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN APRIL, WILL NOT TAKE PLACE IF THERE IS NOT A SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF A ZAIRIAN-IMF STABILIZATION AGREEMENT.

6. WE DISCUSSED THE IDEAS OF "URGENCY" AND "ZAIRIAN PRESSURE" RAISED IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF REFTEL A, BUT ONKELYNX

TOLD US THE ONLY PRESSURE THAT HE SAW WAS BELGIAN PRESSURE
TO GET THE ZAIRIANS OFF TO SEE THE IMF. HE STRESSED MORE
THAN ONCE THAT PRESIDENT MOBUTU "WAS IN A GOOD MOOD" AND
HAD AGREED TO THE TWO PRECONDITIONS. THE BELGIANS,
THEREFORE, ARE PUSHING HARD TO GET THE ZAIRIANS TO
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NEGOTIATE THE STABILIZATION PLAN AND THE BANK REORGANIZATION IMMEDIATELY. HE ASKED THAT, IN OUR TALKS WITH THE IMF, WE URGE THE IMF TO BE PREPARED TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO ANY ZAIRIAN SPEED THAT CAN BE GENERATED. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE SAID THAT THE BELGIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE IMF, DE GROOT, IS FULLY INFORMED AND IS IN STEP WITH THIS SCENARIO.

7. ONKELYNX SAID THAT THE MALDAGUE GROUP WILL PRESENT ITS FINDINGS ON THE BOKANA MISSION TO THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT NEXT WEEK AND THAT FROM THIS MIGHT COME SOME MORE "ACTIONS" OR CHANGES IN THE MOBUTU PLAN SCENARIO. HE PROMISED TO KEEP US FULLY INFORMED. CHAMBERS

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